

Message Text

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USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0544

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: CUNHAL REAFFIRMS PRO-MOSCOW ORIENTATION

SUMMARY: IN JAN 23 INTERVIEW, COMMUNIST LEADER CUNHAL CALLED UPON CIVILIANS AND MILITARY MEN TO BAND TOGETHER TO PREVENT A RETURN TO FASCISM. CUNHAL'S LOW KEY, ESSENTIALLY BLAND REMARKS ARE INDICATIVE OF THE HIGH-ROAD APPROACH WHICH THE COMMUNISTS HAVE ADOPTED IN THE UNFRIENDLY POST NOV 25 ENVIRONMENT. CUNHAL'S EXPRESSIONS OF CONTINUED FIDELITY TO THE "ORTHODOX LINE" CONSTITUTE A REAFFIRMATION OF HIS PRO-MOSCOW ORIENTATION. AS FOR THE REST OF THE INTERVIEW, IT WAS VINTAGE CUNHAL, STILL UNREPRESENTANT DESPITE A LOWER PROFILE. END SUMMARY

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1. (BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) IN INTERVIEW APPEARING IN JAN 23

EDITION OF "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS," COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP)
SECRETARY-GENERAL ALVARO CUNHAL CALLED FOR UNITY OF ALL
CIVILIANS AND MILITARY MEN, REGARDLESS OF IDEOLOGY, TO
PREVENT A RETURN TO FASCISM. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF CUNHAL'S
WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS INCLUDED:

--ORTHODOXY REAFFIRMED: IT HAS OFTEN BEEN ASSERTED, IN A
PEJORATIVE SENSE, THAT THE PCP FOLLOWS AN "ORTHODOX LINE."

IF BY THIS IT IS MEANT THAT PCP IS MARXIST-LENINIST AND
REMAINS FAITHFUL TO THE PRINCIPLES OF "PROLETARIAT INTERNA-
TIONALISM," THAT IT DOES NOT FALL INTO OPPORTUNISTIC AND
REFORMIST POSITIONS, THAN SUCH ASSERTIONS HAVE REAL
FOUNDATION.

--ROLE IN GOVERNMENT: FEW PCP MEMBERS CURRENTLY HAVE
POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT. THE DECISION BY PCP MEMBERS TO
ACCEPT GOVERNMENT POSITIONS WAS MOTIVATED BY DEVOTION TO THE
WORKING CLASS, WHOSE INTERESTS THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO DEFEND
COMMUNISTS, IN ANY EVENT, HAVE NEVER OCCUPIED THE KEY POSITIONS
IN GOVERNMENT, E.G. IN THE ECONOMIC AREA. IF THEY HAD,
CLEARLY THE COUNTRY WOULD NOT BE IN THE GRAVE ECONOMIC
SITUATION IN WHICH IT NOW FINDS ITSELF.

--MILITARY PREDOMINANCE: THE PCP HAS ALWAYS DEFENDED A
SYSTEM WHICH TRULY REFLECTS THE FORCES WHICH PARTICIPATE
IN THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS, I.E., MILITARY MEN AND THE
POPULAR MASSES. THE PCP THEREFORE CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE
CO-EXISTENCE OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY ORGANS
OF POWER--BOTH ORGANS REPRESENTING THE ARMED FORCES MOVE-
MENT (AFM) AND ORGANS RESULTING FROM GENERAL ELECTIONS.

--PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: PCP SUPPORTS DIRECT ELECTION OF
THE PRESIDENT BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES,
UNDER EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES, OF CONVENING THE ELECTORAL
COLLEGE CALLED FOR BY THE AFM-PARTIES PACT. BUT DIRECT
ELECTION OF PRESIDENT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH A "PRESIDENTIAL
SYSTEM" OF GOVERNMENT, WHICH THE PCP CONTINUES TO OPPOSE.
PCP HAS NOT YET MADE UP ITS MIND AS TO WHOM IT WILL SUPPORT
FOR PRESIDENT.

--RELATIONS WITH FAR LEFT: PCP NEVER CONCLUDED AN
ALLIANCE WITH ELEMENTS OF THE SO-CALLED FAR LEFT ITS RELATIONS
WITH THE UNITED REVOLUTIONARY FRONT (FUR) WERE BRIEF AND NEVER
PRODUCED AGREEMENT; THE PCP NEVER HAD CONTACT WITH THE POPULAR
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DEMOCRATIC UNION (UDP) WHOSE DIVISIONISM AND SYSTEMATIC ANTI-
COMMUNISM ARE WELL KNOWN.

--MEETING OF SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PARTIES: IDEA FOR
SUCH MEETING CAME FROM PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS)
PCP HAS REPEATEDLY GIVEN ITS POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT. THE
PURPOSE OF THE PS IN MAKING THE PROPOSAL WAS CLEARLY
EEMAGOGIC. IT IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE THAT THE PS WOULD PROPOSE

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PCP IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT WHEN IN PORTUGAL THE PS HAD MOUNTED A MAJOR CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PCP, HAD ALIGNED ITSELF WITH THE FORCES OF THE RIGHT, AND HAD FOLLOWED AN ORIENTATION WHICH HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SOCIALISM. TO SEEK A COMMON INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY OF COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PARTIES IN THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM WHEN, AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, THE PS DOES NOT EVEN SEEK AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE PCP IN THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY MAKES NO SENSE WHATEVER.

--AFM: IN SPITE OF RECENT INTERNAL MODIFICATIONS, THE AFM REMAINS NECESSARY FOR THE DEFENSE OF LIBERTIES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DEMOCRATIC AND PROGRESSIVE REGIME. THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE AFM WOULD NOT MEAN THE ELIMINATION OF MILITARY MEN FROM POLITICAL LIFE BUT RATHER THE ELIMINATION OF THOSE MEN FAITHFUL TO THE IDEALS OF LIBERTY OF APRIL 25. IT WOULD OPEN THE WAY FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW DICTATORSHIP. THE PCP THEREFORE OPPOSES THE RETURN OF MILITARY MEN TO THE BARRACKS.

(END UNCLASSIFIED)

2. COMMENT: CUNHAL'S LOW-KEY, ESSENTIALLY BLAND REMARKS ARE INDICATIVE OF THE HIGH-ROAD APPROACH WHICH THE PCP HAS OPTED FOR IN ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN THE POST-NOV 25 ENVIRONMENT. THE PCP IS PARTICULARLY NOT LOOKING FOR TROUBLE IN THE HIGH-CHARGED ATMOSPHERE FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE PRELIMINARY REPORT IMPLICATING IT IN THE NOV 25 EVENTS CUNHAL'S EXPRESSIONS OF CONTINUED FIDELITY TO THE "ORTHODOX LINE" CONSTITUTE A REAFFIRMATION OF HIS PRO-MOSCOW ORIENTATION. AS FOR THE REST OF THE INTERVIEW, IT WAS VINTAGE CUNHAL, STILL UNREPENTANT DESPITE A LOWER PROFILE.

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